

# JUMP CUT

A REVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY MEDIA

## JUMP CUT goes electronic

[text version 44](#)

[links](#)

[the last word](#)

[about us](#)

[home](#)

[archive](#)

We have news. *Jump Cut* is now a web-based journal. With this, we present the beginnings of our first electronic issue. For several years as editors we've talked about an electronic on-line version of *Jump Cut*, and now it's here. (You can see our earlier thinking on this subject in an editorial from our issue, No. 40, 1996.) We are going to be a web publication full time and exclusive. In other words, the paper version of *Jump Cut* will no longer appear.

This was a long and involved decision, so we want to lay out some of the reasons here. The basic reason is that to maintain key parts of our mission, putting our energy and efforts into an online publication makes sense. Trying to maintain a dual publication--online and on paper--is not feasible.

We started *Jump Cut* as a forum for radical film criticism which was excluded or marginalized at that time, 1974. Economics dictated an inexpensive format, and from experience in the "underground press" of the 60s, we chose tabloid offset newsprint as our medium. Copy was prepared on typewriters, layout was pasted up, and taken to the printer. The result was inexpensive, allowing us to distribute widely (especially through the network of independent bookstores) and keep a low cover price. The price kept us in the range of student budgets and the avid but nonspecialist film goer open to a left and feminist analysis.

Over time, the quality of the paper (newsprint being cheap, but oh-so-perishable) improved, and the format changed from tabloid size to magazine size. But the marketplace changed as well. *Jump Cut*, like all publications, benefited from subsidized postal rates for magazines. Over time, that has changed and, for example, there is now a base cost of \$4.00 to send one copy overseas. Our substantial non-subscription readership has been drastically eroded by the effects of concentration and rationalization in bookstores. Most independent stores have been driven out by the market force of Borders/Barnes and Noble and other book marketing changes. At the chains, every inch of space is tracked and rationalized, so that even if *Jump Cut* is ordered and put on display, it is not reordered when it sells out. It's been harder and

harder to find *Jump Cut*, except for subscribers and libraries.

An electronic *Jump Cut* leapfrogs over those problems. We know we can reach more people. As teachers we've seen our students change over to using the Internet as a first search tool for getting information. With *Jump Cut* online, our writer's articles are more likely to be discovered, read, and remain easily available. We can reach more people.

We've always regretted that while *Jump Cut* has had an international orientation editorially, we've found it extremely difficult to distribute overseas. The problems of delivering copies abroad to subscribers, libraries, and most of all bookstores has been always frustrating. Even more frustrating was knowing that many people who wanted to read *Jump Cut* found getting the US dollars to get a subscription difficult or impossible. While there are still significant barriers to entry for reading *Jump Cut* online, especially in the developing world, we know that many of the people most likely to want to read *Jump Cut* are those who do have some form of access to the Internet through workplace, library, or administrative unit. People in education and communications areas are the most likely (after government, military, and corporate institutions) to have access throughout the world. Our online version will have both a rich display with graphics and photo illustration, and also a "text only" version for lower bandwidth access and quick downloading. Best of all, it's free (except of course for access time).

Some aspects of *Jump Cut* will not change. We are still an edited and "refereed" publication with the three coeditors evaluating every submission and using our editorial board, and occasional outside advisors as referees. It is still possible to get a print copy by printing out *Jump Cut* locally. Libraries and data bases and indexes will still "know" that *Jump Cut* exists. Julia Lesage is arranging with University of Oregon to archive a print version that will be available to those who need such a document for job purposes.

The biggest immediate improvements that readers will notice is that we can finally use color in illustrations, get articles on-line as soon as they are edited, and keep our resources pieces updated regularly. Color makes sense and is, after all, the dominant form of visual representation in the media today. (Moving image clips and sound are also possible in the digital domain.) We anticipate that as soon as an article is accepted and edited, we will "pre-publish" it online. That is it will be up on the web, and available for reading, even though the full issue is not yet assembled. Once the issue is together, it will be marked as such, indexed, and displayed as a unit. We expect that *Jump Cut* can return to its origins in

presenting much more immediate commentary on new films--one of the hallmarks of our early days that declined with the delays that print publication involved. We also anticipate a return to the dialogue and exchange that marked early issues--a moderated discussion that allows for further exploration of key issues.

We've been inspired in this adventure in publishing by new and newly online film journals:

[\*Senses of Cinema\*](#)

[\*Bright Lights\*](#)

[\*Framework\*](#)

[\*Images\*](#)

as well as ejournals that pioneered the field such as [\*Postmodern Culture\*](#). In particular, if you look at the links section in the [\*Senses of Cinema\*](#) site, you can get a good idea of how many film journals are now online and how rich their offerings are.

With this shift from print to web publishing, our aims remain the same: to develop a radical media analysis that takes into account class, gender, and race as central areas for investigation, to always consider media in terms of social and political contexts and issues. And to examine and analyze new political realities in terms of new social, cultural, and political forces and new technologies transforming our world.